

Message Text

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72

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 131840Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8106

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 3388

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EEC, PFOR, UR

SUBJECT: EC SUMMIT: CSCE

REF: DUBLIN 484

1. SUMMARY: WE DO NOT THINK IT LEGITIMATE OR ACCURATE TO ALLOW THE STATE OF BREZHNEV'S HEALTH TO INFLUENCE IN A SUBSTANTIVE WAY THE COURSE OF CSCE NEGOTIATION. END SUMMARY.

2. BREZHNEV'S HEALTH IS, OF COURSE, PRECARIOUS, ALTHOUGH CAREFULLY TENDED. HOWEVER, WHILE THE NATURE OF BREZHNEV'S ILLNESS COMPELS HIM TO CONSERVE HIS STRENGTH, IT DOES NOT PREVENT HIM FROM ATTENDING TO MAJOR BUSINESS. ANY CONFIDENTIAL

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ATTEMPT TO PUT A PRECISE DATE ON BREZHNEV'S DEPARTURE

FROM THE SCENE OR TO BASE NEGOTIATING STRATEGY ON HIS
UNCERTAIN HEALTH RUNS THE SERIOUS RISK OF ERROR.

3. WE QUESTION THAT BREZHNEV "MAY NOT LAST BEYOND THE SUMMER" (PARA 4 REFTEL) AND ASSUME THAT CROWDED UPCOMING SCHEDULE OF INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC AFFAIRS WHICH WILL REQUIRE BREZHNEV'S PRESENCE IS PREDICATED UPON SOVIET EXPECTATION OF HIS CONTINUATION ON THE SCENE AT LEAST THROUGH THE 25TH PARTY CONGRESS NEXT SPRING.

4. BEST BET IS THAT THE SOVIET LEADERS PROBABLY HOPE FOR A RELATIVELY SMOOTH REVERSION TO COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP DOMINATED BY THE REMAINING SENIOR LEADERS WHEN BREZHNEV LEAVES OFFICE. IN ANY CASE, WE WOULD DOUBT THAT BREZHNEV'S RELINQUISHMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHATEVER REASON BEFORE THE END OF CSCE WOULD CHANGE THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP LINE ON THE CONFERENCE. THE KREMLIN HAS ACQUIRED MAJOR VESTED INTEREST IN THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE CONFERENCE AND THE CONSENSUS OF THE CURRENT LEADERSHIP IS SUCH THAT WE WOULD NOT FORESEE A MEANINGFUL CHANGE IN THE SOVIET LINE ON CSCE WHETHER BREZHNEV IS AT THE TOP OR NOT.

STOESSEL

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Message Attributes

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